



April Methodelma 2026

*"We are loving,
Spirit-led disciples of Jesus Christ
growing in God through
Nurture, Education, Worship, and Service."*

Elma United Methodist Church

2991 Bowen Rd. Elma, NY 14059

Rev. Lisa D. Taylor, Pastor

Sunday Worship Service
In-Person Worship at starts at 9:15am

Church Office Phone Number: 716-652-5427

Pastor's Cell Phone Number: 716-341-1896

Church Office E-mail: ElmaUMOffice@gmail.com

Pastor's Message



Easter People CELEBRATE!

Jesus' Church is made up of Easter People! We are a family of God who are bound together, not by human blood ties, but by the blood of Jesus. Not by virtue of being biologically born to a human father and mother, but born again by the Spirit of God. The first is a natural occurrence, the second – supernatural. Peter describes us as living stones being built into a spiritual house (1 Peter 2:5), and tells us, “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.” (1 Peter 2:9-10)

When Jesus was on the cross, He bound His dearly loved disciple, John, to His mother, Mary. They entered into a parent/child relationship that would not have happened outside of their relationship with Him. Although the Bible tells us Jesus had brothers and sisters, who would likely have had a natural family obligation to care for Mary, He chose to entrust her to John, a spiritual brother, who had come to know and receive Jesus as the Messiah. For Jesus, the bond people experience through faith in Him, in His blood shed on our behalf, and in the Holy Spirit through whom we are offered God’s grace, creates a relationship that transcends the natural. It makes us the people of God, and calls us to a unique opportunity in this natural world. It calls us to be the people who can reflect God’s glory and participate with Him in offering God’s grace to others. Because we have received His mercy, we may offer mercy. Because we have received His love, we may offer His saving love to others.

Being among God’s chosen people is more than just about the security of our own salvation. It is about us entering into Jesus’ story of calling people to Himself so they may become bound to Him – and to us – as a precious, unique spiritual family.

Easter People! Celebrate being God’s family, and celebrate being part of Jesus’ mission in this world!

Blessings, Pastor Lisa

PASTOR LISA'S SCHEDULE:

Pastor Lisa is typically in Elma Sundays, late afternoon Mondays through Wednesday evenings, works from home on Thursdays, takes her Sabbath on Fridays, and has her day off on Saturdays. The schedule for Thursday through Saturday sometimes changes depending upon the needs of the church. In general, she prefers not to work past 9:30pm, although this is sometimes unavoidable. As the church is a pretty busy place, it may be best to make an appointment if you want to have time to talk with Pastor Lisa. But you are always welcome to stop by. In emergencies please use the Pastor's cell phone 716-341-1896; especially during hours when no one is scheduled to be in the office.

MONTHLY PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES:

Wednesday, April 15th , 10-10:30am and/or 7p-8pm.

Please join Pastor Lisa in a time of gathering for informal prayer for our church, our community, and personal needs. Prayer for healing with laying on of hands and anointing with oil will be available for those desiring this form of prayer ministry. You are welcome to come and pray silently with those praying aloud and to pray aloud if you are so led by the Holy Spirit. You are also welcome if you have never tried a prayer group before and want to learn, or just want to try this one.

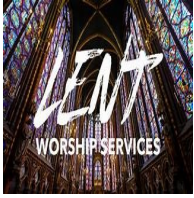
CHURCH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Typically everything you need to know about what's happening at Elma UMC can be found in the Methodelma via hard copy that's mailed to those on the Methodelma mailing list, emailed copy that's emailed to those on that list, or the copy posted on the website. There is always hard copy available at the church to pick up as well.

For Current Announcements, check out the Announcement Board positioned near the coatroom.

All Methodelma submissions are due to Jill by the 15th of each month. Thank you!

Holy Week, and Easter Sunday :



March 29th – Combined Adult and Young People CE -

Journey to the Cross

Holy Week Services:



Palm Sunday – March 29 Service starts at 9:15am

(Remembering Jesus' final entry into Jerusalem and the beginning of Holy Week) – Followed by a special Worship and Education Hour Journey through Holy Week for Everyone to Join In at 10:30am



Maundy Thursday — April 2nd Service starts at 7pm

(Celebration Remembering Jesus' last Passover with his disciples: Jesus washing the disciples' feet and the institution of the Lord's Supper)



Good Friday — April 3rd Service starts at 7pm

(Remembering how Jesus died for our sins)



Holy Saturday – April 4th

Holy Saturday Prayer Vigil 9:00am-3:00pm, come and pray for as long as you like

- There is a Passover Seder at Classics V in Amherst with Messianic Jewish Congregation B'rith Hadoshah 5-9pm for those who RSVP'd



Easter Sunday – April 5th 9:15am

Celebrating the Resurrection! He is Risen Indeed! Service starts at 9:15

CHURCH EVENTS :

Church members and ministry leaders are welcome to schedule meetings and events related to their established church ministries. Please let Jill in the office know about your plans so they can be put on the office calendar and dates/times checked for potential conflicts, and so she can respond to questions those coming may call the office about. Most uses of the building that are directly related to established church/district/conference ministries do not require prior building use approval. However, use by outside groups, and special personal family events usually do. Please check with Jill and she will confirm with the church trustees.

Bible Challenge:

Read Through the Bible in a Year by Reading 4 Chapters Each Day!

This year's sequence of readings will take us back and forth between the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) and the New Testament. John Wesley believed and taught that the Bible is the most important book for Christians to read to help us know Jesus and understand Christian faith. So please make it a priority to read your Bible this year! If you are unsure about which version to use or would like to know about study helps for your reading, ask Pastor Lisa.

Paper copies of the entire year's readings are available on the table outside Pastor Lisa's office, in half and full-page sizes for you to tuck into your Bible. If you prefer to follow the chronological reading schedule, copies are also available to pick up, or Pastor Lisa can email it to you. Enjoy a blessed year in God's Holy Word!

(read 4 chapters per day each week)

Week 13 – March 26 th -April 1 st : Luke chapters 6-24; Acts chapters 1-9

Week 14 – April 2 nd -8 th : Acts chapters 10-28; Isaiah chapters 1-9

Week 15 – April 9 th -15 th : Isaiah chapters 10-37

Week 16 – April 16 th -22 nd : Isaiah chapters 38-65

Week 17 – April 23 rd -29 th : Isaiah chapter 66; Philippians chapters 1-4; Colossians chapters 1-4; 1 Thessalonians chapters 1-5; 2 Thessalonians chapters 1-3; Hosea chapters 1-11

Week 18 – April 30 th -May 6 th : Hosea chapters 12-14; Romans chapters 1-16; Amos chapters 1-9

OUR WAY FORWARD:

Elma UMC will be exploring Our Way Forward, Upper New York's Graceful Conversations and Covenanting Process for Navigating the 2020/24 General Conference Changes about Human Sexuality. Our conference leadership has provided a process and resources for prayerful discernment that will ultimately lead to establishing a covenant that authentically reflects Elma UMC's position and practices. The Leadership Team has already affirmed the need to engage in this process, and the process for forming the team to plan the conversation sessions and covenant writing process has begun. This process involves collaboration among the pastor, Leadership Team, Our Way Forward Team, and the District Superintendent. It will take time and patience to accomplish, but the time will be well worth it to collaboratively process the Book of Discipline changes and "move forward in a manner that honors [our] members' beliefs and diversity within the United Methodist Church."

It is very important that everyone, members and constituents, participate in this process so to true position of the whole body is faithfully discerned. Please make participation in the process a priority as we move into it in 2026. Pastor Lisa is seeking 6 EUMC active members and constituents to be part of the organizational team. Please let her know ASAP if you are willing to serve.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION UPDATE:

There is help needed from those gifted and interested in serving our young people and adults in this very important ministry area. Please reach out to Sue Brunner, Cheryl Buechi, Jill Kochmanski, or Pastor Lisa if you are sensing God nudging you to be part of it all! Rebuilding this ministry is a work in progress and many hands make light work. So please prayerfully consider what your role in Christian Education at EUMC could be.

SPECIAL CHURCH CONFERENCE:

Sunday, April 26 th 11am – for the purpose of voting on a change to the specifications of the use of the Scholarship Fund, which is part of the Church's invested funds. The recommendations for the changes have come from the Board of Trustees and approved by the Leadership Team. But to become final, all changes to the use of this fund must be approved at a Church Council meeting that has been approved by the District Superintendent before meeting. Only the business on the approved agenda may be brought up at a special church conference.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER:



On Friday, March 6th Elma UMC hosted this year's World Day of Prayer. It was a blessing to share in a prayer service created in Nigeria that was celebrated throughout the world on that day. Over 30 people attended, representing 6 Elma/East Aurora area churches. Thank you to everyone who organized and participated in this wonderful event.

THE ELMA PAGE TURNERS (BOOK CLUB):

Shirley Schildkamp



On Wednesday, April 1, at 6:30 P.M. the Elma Page Turners will meet in the church youth room to discuss *THE MIDNIGHT LIBRARY* by Matt Haig. The group meets for about an hour the first Wednesday of every month to discuss a book. Everyone is welcome.

LEADERSHIP TEAM NEWS:

Elma UMC's Leadership Team is seeking strong communication between itself and the members and friends of Elma UMC. Everyone is welcome to reach out to Team members about the church and to find out more about the new ways we get to do the administrative and visioning work. Items for consideration for the LTeam agenda must be submitted by the 10th of each month. There are forms on the table outside the office. Meeting minutes are posted on the bulletin board.

Here is your Team for 2026:

Class of 2026 – Steve Buechi, Annette DeNies (team chair for 2026), Wendie Stockton

Class of 2027 – Sue Brunner, D'Lynn Zurek

Class of 2028 – Randi Dressel, Dan Sank, Jim Wojnar

Lay Leader - Rose Shiesley, and Lay Member to AC - Andrew Hartley also serve

Pastor Lisa works with and is accountable to the Leadership Team for all program, ministry, and mission areas, and to the UNY Annual Conference for oversight of all administrative functions.

In addition, your Leadership Development and Nominations Team (Pastor Lisa-chair, Rose Shiesley, Steve DeNies, Martha Horohoe, and Pam Thauer) will be working on creating new ways to help our members and friends grow in Christian discipleship, as we all discover the ministries we get to do through sharing the Good NEWS of Jesus through Nurture, Education, Worship, and Service. You can let any of these team members know what you're interested in.

Elma UMC's Board of Trustees – Peter Buechi – Chair, Steve DeNies, Randi Dressel, Greg Fuer, Dan Sank, Bruce Stockton, James Trombley, and Dave Wainwright

CHURCH DIRECTORY:

Jill is completing the church directory update/correction page and it will be available shortly. Please also keep on top of checking your email for church news and don't forget to regularly check their spam or junk folders (or whatever your email account calls it). And please inform Jill of any changes to your contact information. If you are expecting to hear from the church via email and do not, please contact Jill in the office so the problem can be corrected.



Christian Education News

We hope you have had a meaningful Lenten season reflecting on Christ's ministry, death, and resurrection. Taking time to examine on our own spiritual journey allows is to grow and mature as discipleships of Jesus Christ.

April 5 **Happy Easter! Fellowship time for all following worship**

April 12 **Children - *What is the Church?* - In the Youth Room**
11:00 – 12:00 **Adults – *Conclusion of the Lent Study*– In the library**

April 19 **Children – *Creation Care* – In the Youth Room**
11:00 – 12:00 **Adults – *When Christians Get it Wrong* – In the library**

April 26 **Children – *Creation Care* – In the Youth Room**
11:00 – 12:00 **Adults – *Special Church Conference***

Tuesday Bible Study Join us in the library every Tuesday at 9:30 a.m.
When Christians Get It Wrong

Wednesday Online Devotion – 3:30pm on Facebook

***** Stayed tuned for information about our VBS Family Fun Night.
Watch for the sign-up sheet so we can gauge interest and availability. *****

We are always looking for help with Christian Education activities.
Please see a CE team member if you would like to help in any way.
Summer planning will begin soon.


Christian Education Team

Cheryl Buechi	D'Lynn Zurek	Jennifer Fuer
Carrie Schmitz	Samantha Vidal	Sue Brunner



Worship Volunteers	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
<p>Ushers: Bruce & Wendie Stockton Liturgists: Tara Doster -Piskothy Greeters: Amanda Nolan Up & About: We need 2 People</p>	<p>5 Easter Sunday 8:45am Fellowship Time 9:15am - Worship Service 10:30am Fellowship Time</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7 9:30 AM Bible Study 10:30 AM Wool Gatherers</p>
<p>Ushers: R. Dressel & A. Nolan Liturgists: Ella Vidal Greeters: Steve Buechi Up & About: We need 2 People Fellowship: Randi Dressel</p>	<p>12 8:45am Fellowship Time 9:15 am Worship Service 10:30am Fellowship Time 11am Christian Education– Conclusion of the Lent Study 11am Choir Practice</p>	<p>13 12:30pm Lunch Bunch</p>	<p>14 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds 9:30 AM Bible Study 10:30 AM Wool Gatherers</p>
<p>Ushers: R. Shiesley & A. Nolan Liturgists: Martha Horohoe Greeters: Sue Brunner Up & About: We need 2 People Fellowship: DeNies</p>	<p>19 8:45am Fellowship Time 9:15 am Worship Service 10:30am Fellowship Time 11am Christian Education– When Christians get it Wrong 11am Choir Practice</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds 9:30 AM Bible Study 10:30 AM Wool Gatherers</p>
<p>Ushers: M. Bessey & Sue Brunner Liturgists: Laura Buechi Greeters: Darlene Green Up & About: We need 2 People Fellowship: Sue Brun-</p>	<p>26 8:45am Fellowship Time 9:15 am Worship Service 10:30am Fellowship Time 11am Special Church Conference 11am Choir Practice</p>	<p>27 LT Meeting– 7pm</p>	<p>28 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds 9:30 AM Bible Study 10:30 AM Wool Gatherers</p>

2026

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1 3:30 PM Online Devotion 6:30 PM Book Club</p>	<p>2 Holy Thursday 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds 7pm Holy Thursday Service</p>	<p>3 Good Friday 7pm Good Friday Service</p>	<p>4 Holy Saturday 9a-3p Prayer Vigil</p>
<p>8 3:30 PM Online Devotion</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>
<p>15 10-10:30am Monthly Prayer Gathering 3:30 PM Online Devotion 7-7:30pm Monthly Prayer Gathering METHODELMA ARTICLES DUE</p>	<p>16 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds</p>	<p>17 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 4 yr olds Only</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>22 3:30 PM Online Devotion</p>	<p>23 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds</p>	<p>24 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 4 yr olds Only</p>	<p>25 9 AM– 12 noon Church Work Day</p> 
<p>29</p>	<p>30 8:45-1145 AM Preschool 3 & 4 yr olds</p>		

SAVE THE DATE:



United Women in Faith is hosting a catered dinner on Tuesday, June 9 at 6:00 in the fellowship hall.

All women are invited.

MISSIONS:



April's FISH item is **CANNED RAVIOLI**.

Though any non-perishable food item is accepted and appreciated.

Brittany Wojnar



GARAGE SALE:

The Elma United Women in Faith and the Elma UMC Preschool are holding a garage sale

Saturday, May 2 from 9-12

There will be a \$2bag sale at 11:30.

Items for the sale may be brought to the church at any time. Please make sure that any boxes with books, any soft/cloth items are taped shut to keep mice out and if possible please wait till April to bring items over to the church.

Donations of all items except clothing (shoes, belts, purses may be donated) are greatly appreciated.

Help with set up and pricing is needed the week before the sale; help with cashing and bagging, as well as cleanup after the sale, is needed on May 2. Pizza will be provided for workers on the 2nd.



SCHOLARSHIPS:



Elma UMC Undergraduate Scholarships



Each year Elma UMC awards Scholarships in the amount of \$4,000.00 each to undergraduate students whose applications are accepted by the Scholarship Committee. Applications must be complete, with all additional materials included, and submitted by the deadline date May 13, 2026. Check the EUMC website for complete information and to download the application. The members of Elma UMC are blessed to be able to provide scholarships for our young adult students!

LUNCH BUNCH:



Wendie Stockton

Join friends for lunch
Monday, April 13th at 12:30pm.
Olive Tree on Broadway in Lancaster.
Sign up on the bulletin board

CREATION CARE SUNDAY:

Sunday, May 3, 2026

Our Elma UMC congregation will celebrate Creation Care on Sunday, May 3, 2026. The entire morning will be a time of giving thanks to God for sustaining us through the natural world, and for gaining inspiration and knowledge so that we may care better for the planet.

Pastor Lisa will lead us in a Creation Care Worship Service at 9:15am.

Following worship, we will share a meatless “fellowship dinner”. Please bring a dish with no meat (though dairy products are acceptable). If you’re feeling unsure of what to prepare, we will provide suggestions for delicious, healthy and environmentally responsible meatless dishes.

Our Elma UMC Creation Care Team will provide a short program during our Fellowship time together. We will have a time of sharing in a “Solutions Circle”. Think about Creation Care success stories that you can share, and then think about how we can create our own Creation Care success story.

A sign up sheet will be circulated during Sunday morning worship services in April.

We hope you can join us for an enlightening and delicious Creation Care Fellowship Time.

ASBURY RETREAT CENTER SUMMER CAMP 2026:

Registration is now open for summer camp at Asbury Retreat Center! Make your plans now.

Check out their website at Asburyun.org/programs

Once again, our generous United Women of Faith will help fund camp fees.



Asbury Express by Day
ages 7-18



Asbury Express III
ages 13-18



Asbury Express II
ages 10-12



Asbury Express I
ages 7-9



Together Time:
A Family Retreat



Silver Lake Experience
July 30– August 1, 2026



Women's Retreat
August 16-18, 2026

Spend some time at camp, relaxing and having fun with engaging activities and worship while you learn and grow with God.

SAFE SANCTUARIES 2026 TRAINING:

2026 Safe Sanctuaries Training dates are out.

All clergy, laity working with children, youth, vulnerable adults, our preschool, Christian Education, Up & About room and are not Safe Sanctuaries Trained please sign up with Jilliane in the Office or email her. All these trainings are online and 3 1/2 hours long, if you would like an in person training you can reach out to safesanctuaries@unyumc.org. Online training dates are below and hanging on the announcement board in the hallway



Saturday, May 2 9am-1230pm

Saturday, August 1 9am-1230pm

Saturday, November 7 9am-1230pm



DANNY'S HELPING HANDS:

Danny's Helping Hands
(Satellite Church)
FOOD MINISTRY



Saturday, April 4th

EUMC will be open the first Saturday of each month from 10:00 a.m. – Noon
Donations of non-perishable items or monetary gifts are needed. Jesus reminds us that one of the fundamental measures of our lives will be how we cared for people in need:

“For I was hungry and you gave me food” Matthew 25:35

If you would like to serve (volunteer) contact Brittany Wojnar



4/01—Bethany Fuer	4/07—Ally Brunner	4/09—Grace Trombley
4/11—Candace Reimer	4/12—Donna Smith	4/13—Maxwell Denies
4/13—Owen Haines	4/13—John McCarthy	4/15—Meghan Hornung
4/15—Tom Mannion		4/23—Henry Thauer
4/18—Laurel Wojnar	4/22—Lindsey Garbacz	4/25—Richard Haberl
4/25—Dorothy Hake	4/27—Lisa Nowak	4/28—Tammy Sugrue
4/29—Ryan Schmitz		



4/13—Ed & Beverly Hornung 4/22—Bob & Nancy Gradwell

If your birthday or anniversary (or someone you know) is ever omitted, please call or email Jilliane in the church office: (716) 652-5427 or elmaumoffice@gmail.com

Thank You!

GIVING GARDEN :

As we look forward to another growing season in our Giving Garden, I would like to invite and encourage you to participate in this ministry. I have been in charge of the Giving Garden for the past 5 years and have been abundantly blessed by this ministry. However, I find myself in a position where I don't feel I can give the garden the attention it needs/requires. If anyone is interested in taking over the Giving Garden, please see Sue Brunner or give me a call at 716-982-8924. I will be happy to help and share information about the garden. It is a wonderful ministry providing nutritious, fresh produce for local families served by FISH of East Aurora.



“A church garden can meet many needs—feeding the hungry, educating children, healing addicts, beautifying derelict property, overcoming racial divides, and more. And it can be more—a blessing, even long after the immediate needs are met.”

I hope you will prayerfully consider how you can support the Elma UMC Giving Garden and the needs of our local community.

LEADERSHIP TEAM NEWS:

Steven Buechi opened the meeting with prayer and “checking in”.

Andrew led our spiritual development portion of the meeting with a conversation from the Adult Discipleship Hour study When Christians Get It Wrong.

We reviewed the Pastor’s reports and financial reports.

The Trustees December report:

- o Removal and replacement of stove in kitchen
- o Hiring new cleaner
- o Chem-dry deep cleaning entrance hallway carpet
- o Discussion about boiler
- o Discussion about dish sanitizer (has been de-limed)
- o Need more exterior lighting

Discussion about creating a policy regarding the church’s involvement in politics in alignment with our UMC Social Creed and Social Principles. Continued discernment is required.

Town Hall Meeting on March 1. We hope you were able to attend.

- o Summary of Leadership Team role and work in progress
- o New Christian Education structure providing educational opportunities for youth and adults
- o Several program opportunities to participate in:
 - > Intentional Discipleship Plan – continue to grow and mature on your discipleship journey
 - > Formation of the Our Way Forward Team - navigating the 2020/24 General Conference changes about human sexuality
 - > Prayer Initiative from the Bishop – rebuilding a vibrant life of prayer
 - > Formation of the Good News Team to allow for collaboration among all committees
- o Steven Buechi provided a review of our finances: effective budget for this year is approx. \$280k, & the anticipated income is approx. \$142k. Leaving a deficit of approx. \$138k.

Our next Leadership Team Meeting will be Monday, April 27 at 7:00pm. ALL are welcome to attend.

CREATION CARE SUNDAY:

Sunday, May 3rd will be a special Creation Care Service at 9:15am, followed by a special meatless Pot Luck lunch and a brief program. Recipes for meatless lunch dishes are available if you need one. We hope everyone will join in!

CREATION CARE – Instilling a Love for God's Earth in Children

We love our children and most of us—I venture to guess—are taking steps personally to assure the world they'll inherit from us is clean and healthy.

But how well Earth can support them will depend too on how they treat it, and so, a good gift is to assure they care for God's creation.

A love of God's planet might be one of the best things kids can inherit from us, and exposing children to nature can help; however, the out-of-doors is not the same as when I was growing up in East Aurora: Fishing, camping, exploring, hiking. Largely due to climate change, ticks, mosquitoes and the diseases they carry are now major concerns. The CDC reports that Lyme disease 'hot spots' in the Northeast and upper Midwest, for instance, increased by more than 320% between 1993 and 2012.

So, what are some safe ways to pass a love for creation along to kids? Sometime around this Earth Day (April 22nd), why not try some new and fun activities? Here are some ideas:

1. While a small child's brushing her teeth, leave the tap running (just once) & collect the water into gallon jug(s). Have her carry the jugs up a hill, around the house, etc. This exercise demonstrates powerfully how much water can be saved by the simple act of turning off the water when it's not needed. For older children, a similar exercise using a bathtub-full of water can be appropriate. Just make sure those jugs are sealed tightly!
2. Plant a pollinator garden, and watch the birds, bees, bats, etc. come around. Talk with your child about how their food supply—and yours—depends on these diligent animals, and how pesticides are endangering them (<https://www.worldwildlife.org/our-work/wildlife/protecting-pollinators-by-reducing-pesticides/>).
3. Plant a tree (but don't forget to assign everybody watering duties).
4. Involve your child in sorting items for recycling. Show them videos of plastic waste in the oceans and landfills. Talk about how much cannot be recycled, and ask them for ideas on what we can do about that.
5. After showing those videos, talk with the child about the benefits of repairing items over discarding them. Find a broken item and work together to restore it. This activity can be combined with watching videos like "Story of Stuff" (<https://www.storyofstuff.org/movies/story-of-stuff/>).
6. Another activity to combine with such videos is cleaning closets and donating unneeded clothes. Did you know that the average American generates 82 pounds of textile waste annually? Keeping old garments in use keeps them out of the trash.

All these activities should be applied in age-appropriate, positive and encouraging ways, of course, remembering that love casts out fear (1 John 4:18). And it never hurts to repeat that the best lesson is often a good example.



MUSIC NEWS:

Greetings, Elma UMC Family!

We made it! We survived another WNY winter and Spring has finally arrived! There is beauty to be found in every season- God is so good! But one of my favorite things I love about Spring is the returning bird-song. Most mornings, I'm awake long before the alarm goes off at 5 a.m., and I love to lay in the dark, listening to the birds chirp and sing while it's still pitch black outside. I believe if we have our eyes, ears, hearts and spirits opened to the Lord at all times, He can teach us so much through His creation.

There are many examples in the Bible of those who still sang and worshipped God in the darkest of times....

* King David wrote and sang many Psalms while being hunted by Saul, or at the lowest points in his life due to sin, or when he cried out to God to forgive, deliver and save him from the miry pit of despair and depression.

* Paul and Silas sang hymns at midnight while they were imprisoned, beaten and in shackles in a cold, dark Roman prison for preaching the gospel, waiting for eventual death.

* Miriam sang a song of deliverance after her brother, Moses, parted the Red Sea, allowing the Hebrew children to escape sure death from a raging Pharaoh.

* Mary, the mother of Jesus, sang a song to the Lord, when she found out she was chosen by God to carry His Son, knowing fully she could be stoned to death as a single teenage pregnant girl in her culture.

If God can cause the birds to sing in the dark, and David, Paul, Silas, Miriam, Mary and others, during the darkest moments of their lives, maybe, just maybe..... I can learn this lesson too from the birds outside my window. I don't have to wait to sing in the sunshine.... I can, and should, sing in the middle of the darkness too. God is faithful, in the light and in the dark, and He will never leave us or forsake us. So, next time you hear the birds singing before dawn, lift your heart in praise to the One who created us to sing to and worship Him!

I am a preacher's kid, and I grew up in my Dad's church singing so many amazing hymns of faith- one of my favorites is "His Eye Is On The Sparrow"

Why should I feel discouraged
Why should the shadows come
Why should my heart be lonely
And long for heaven and home
When Jesus is my portion my constant friend is He
His eye is on the sparrow and I know He watches me
His eye is on the sparrow and I know He watches me

I sing because I'm happy I sing because I'm free
For His eye is on the sparrow
And I know He watches me

Let not your heart be troubled
His tender words I hear
And resting on His goodness
I lose my doubt and fear
Tho' by the path He leadeth but one step I may see
His eye is on the sparrow and I know He watches me
His eye is on the sparrow and I know He watches me

Whenever I am tempted whenever clouds arise
When songs give place to sighing
When hope within me dies
I draw the closer to Him from care He sets me free
His eye is on the sparrow and I know He watches me
His eye is on the sparrow and I know He watches me

Sing to the One Who is worthy!
Nan Keller, Worship Music Minister

Elma United Methodist Church

2991 Bowen Rd.

Elma, NY 14059

